

Resources for Maryland Land Patents and Maps

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Maryland Land Patents

Many Shipleys patented land tracts in Maryland, beginning with Adam Shipley .1, who arrived near Annapolis in 1668. This means that they were granted rights to a particular parcel of land by Lord Baltimore. Quit-rent then was to be paid twice yearly. All Maryland land can be traced back to a patent. More information about Maryland land patents can be found here:

<https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/stagser/s1259/113/html/modpats2.html>

An informative article called **“The Quit-Rent System in the American Colonies”** can be found at **jstor.org**.

It can be very interesting to see exactly where our Shipley ancestors patented land, and it can be helpful in genealogical research. Some Shipleys patented multiple tracts of land, and they did not necessarily live on the land that they patented. But it can be helpful to see when families patented land near each other, which might imply a connection.

Below is some information on where to find copies of the original Maryland land patents online.

Following that, there is a description of where to find maps that show the location of some of these tracts of land; and additional information about historical maps and early tax records that can be useful in genealogical research.

How to search for Maryland Land Patents online

To find copies of original land patents in Maryland:

Go to plats.msa.maryland.gov; then at upper left, select the county that the land was in when it was patented; then choose “Advanced Search” at upper left. On the next screen, where it says “Description”, enter a word that appears in the plat name or description, such as the name of the person who patented it. Note some things are spelled inconsistently, so for example, when searching for Greenberry’s or Greenbury’s Grove, try searching just for “Grove”. Or, since it was patented by Samuel Shipley, just search for “Shipley”. You would find this patent in Baltimore County land patents, although that land is now in Carroll County. You can sort the results so that the date is ascending, so the older patents are shown first.

Once you find the patent you are looking for, click on the Accession number in the far right column. This takes you to a page which displays the first page on the left, giving the name of the patent, date patented, and the name of person who patented it. At bottom right, there are links to each page of the handwritten patent record.

Maps of Maryland Land Patents

Anne Arundel County Land Patent Maps

For the tracts owned or patented by Adam Shipley in the southern part of Anne Arundel County, there is a book called ***Land Grants in the Middle Neck Hundred of Anne Arundel County Maryland 1650-1704***, by Robert T. Hall. There was a fire in the State House in Annapolis in 1704, and the land patent documents prior to that date were destroyed in the fire, so this book has information that is hard to find elsewhere. A hundred was a political division of a county, similar to what we call districts. This book shows the location of HOWARD & PORTER'S RANGE, where Adam acquired 100 acres in 1679, and where he and his wife Lois lived; and also the location of SHEPLEY'S CHOICE, 200 acres patented by Adam Shipley in 1681. A few copies of this book can be found for sale online, and there is a copy of it in the collection of the Carroll County Genealogical Society, found at the public library in Westminster MD.

There is another book by Robert Hall called ***Land Grants in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, 1650-1704, South River Hundred***. On the cover of this book, there is a map of the original Anne Arundel County hundreds: Herring Creek, West River, South River, Middle Neck, and Broad & Town Neck. This is the only map I can find that shows the location of these hundreds, so it's worth googling this book to see an image of the book's cover.

Howard County Land Patent Map:

Dr. Caleb Dorsey's Original Land Grants of Howard County Maryland:

Howard County was formed in 1851, but it was originally part of Anne Arundel County. Caleb Dorsey created a map of the land grants that are now in Howard County. There is a copy in the Howard County Historical Society archives, and they have a digital copy which was sent to me by their library in the Howard County Public Library in Ellicott City. They have given permission to store a copy of it here at the website of The Shipleys of Maryland, **shipleysofmaryland.org**. It is found in the "Public Resources" section, under "Shipley Properties".

Howard County Land Patents spreadsheet

There is a spreadsheet available online that lists the patents that are now in Howard County, which is extremely helpful, since it lists the name of the tract, who patented it, and a description. It also has links that used to take you to a copy of the original patent, but now the link just takes you to a listing of the patent. Use the instructions above, "How to Search for Maryland Land Patents Online".

The spreadsheet is found here:

<https://jsfecmd.info/FREAK/HowardCountyLandPatents.html>

George Horvath's Land Patent maps for Carroll, Howard, and Baltimore counties

George Horvath plotted early land maps to current maps of portions Carroll, Howard, and Baltimore counties, and they are available at the website of the Carroll County Genealogical Society at **ccgsmd.org**. Select "Maps" on the left, then scroll to the bottom to see a list of the available maps.

The maps that I have found most useful in researching the Shipley land patents are the three listed as Eldersburg, Winfield to Eldersburg, and Sykesville. Adam Shipley's sons Robert, Richard, and Peter inherited his land on the tract called ADAM THE FIRST in the area of Elkridge in Howard County. From there, many Shipleys moved north into what is now Carroll County, around what is now Sykesville and Eldersburg, and west toward Winfield and Woodbine.

Tracey Land Patent Map Carroll County (1720-1756)

This map showing the location of early Carroll County land patents by Grace Tracey (using Dr. Arthur G. Tracey's information) is online, and can be downloaded as a PDF. It shows the borders of Baltimore and Frederick County before Carroll County was formed. This link takes you to a page in the Maryland State Archives. Scroll down to the description which describes the digital image, and click on that: **mdhmapping.com/tracey-patent-map-carroll-county-1720-1756/**

Baltimore County Land Patent Map

At a website at **map-maker.org**, someone who has a hobby of genealogy and making maps has put together some information to help navigate what is available on the internet, including in Maryland Archives. There is a lot of information on this page which I have not explored.

The website owner has used software called DeedMapper to create maps of land patents in Baltimore County. Scroll down to the section titled "For use if you do not have the Deedmapper Program". Click on "Baltimore County". This takes you to a map of the land tracts. These tracts are those that are now in Baltimore County, not those that were patented in Baltimore County but are now in Carroll County. At top left, there is a tab called "Tableview" which is a spreadsheet which can be used to search for particular land tracts. So you can search for "Shipley", for example. you will find several tracts patented by Benjamin Shipley, including Plumb Tree Bottom, patented by Benjamin Shipley in 1799. The map can be useful in seeing which tracts are near each other.

More information for land patents in Frederick, Carroll and Washington counties

To find out more about land patents in what are now Frederick, Carroll, and Washington counties, there are copies of handwritten index cards created by Dr. Arthur G. Tracey which give information including acreage and neighboring tracts.

They can be accessed online at the link below, in alphabetical order by tract name. Scroll down to select the beginning letter of the tract you are searching for.
mdhistory.msa.maryland.gov/tracey_fr_wa_cr/html/index.html

Information about Carroll County land patents is also available on a computer at the Carroll County Historical Society library in Westminster MD. The information has been typed in, and includes information about sales of parts of those tracts, including the date, the seller, and the buyer. The computer also contains plats, drawings that show the shape of the tract, with notes showing the location of neighboring tracts. The index cards and the tracts can be printed for a small fee.

Additional Useful Maps

The *Atlas of Carroll Co. Maryland* is an 1877 book by Lake, Griffing and Stevenson, It is available for sale at the Historical Society of Carroll County in Westminster. The maps are available online but the book is worth having since additional information about local history has been added by HSCC. The maps show the location of the homes of families that lived there at the time. This is very valuable information, which can be combined with information found in census records to find out where families lived, and who they lived near. I found the maps of the Freedom and Franklin districts very useful in researching my Shipley ancestors. Here is the link to the online maps at the website of Johns Hopkins University:
<https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/32814>

There are additional useful maps at the website of the Carroll County Genealogical Society at **ccgsmd.org**. Select "Maps" on the left of the homepage.

The **1862 Martinet Map** includes the locations of family homes in that year. I found the home of my ancestor, Sarah Shipley, in the Freedom district shown on this map, and was able to confirm that this was the correct person by looking at census records to see what families had lived near her and her husband John Wesley Shipley. The **1863 Military Map** of Carroll County also shows the location of family homes.

The maps at **ccgsmd.org** showing the locations of the Baltimore County and Frederick County hundreds or districts in various years can be useful in determining where families lived. Census records are listed by hundreds or districts, so maps of those areas can help locate where families lived.

Maryland Rent Rolls

The Maryland State Archives provides a card index of those responsible for paying the annual quit rent due Lord Baltimore.

The Maryland Rent Rolls can be very helpful in discovering where our ancestors owned land. When Lord Baltimore granted a tract of land, it was granted under the "Conditions of Plantation." Those conditions included the obligation to pay quit rent, a fixed rate per hundred acres that was paid twice yearly at St. Mary's City.

A PDF version of the Rent Rolls card index can be viewed or downloaded from **guide.msa.maryland.gov**. Select “Display by Series”; enter S1428 where it says “Jump to Series ID”. The index cards are split up into sections, alphabetically. Records for “Shipley” and “Sheply” are found in S1428-12. Click on “Links” to view the PDF, then search the page. You can search for “Shipley”, but also search for “Sheply” to find the Shepley’s Choice tract of 200 acres, patented in 1681.

Tax Assessments

After the Revolution, quit rent was no longer due to Lord Baltimore. Instead, taxes were assessed by the United States federal government.

The **1783 tax assessment** is available online at the Maryland State Archives. It lists the number of acres owned and the name of the tract or tracts. Select the name of the county at the site below:

<https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/stagser/s1400/s1437/html/ssi1437e.html>

The **1798 tax assessment** included a description of the acreage of land tracts owned, the buildings on the land, and the number of slaves owned. The assessment for Baltimore and Carroll Counties is available in ***The Particular Assessments for Baltimore and Carroll Counties, Maryland: 1798***, by George Horvath. There are copies available at Amazon.